

• Abroad •

Caracas. The regime of Romulo Betancourt needs all its dexterity to keep its balance in Venezuela's swiftly changing equilibrium of forces. Many persons in business, the Army and the Church, not to speak of disgruntled ex-favorites of the overthrown Jiménez, are still unreconciled to Betancourt, with his Communist past and socialist present. But today the sharpest opposition is coming from the left wing of his own party and the student organization, both heavily infiltrated by Kremlin and Castro agents. Venezuela has now lost its Cuban oil market to Russia. Betancourt and Trujillo have always hated each other, both on doctrinal grounds and as regional rivals; and Betancourt is convinced that it was Trujillo's gunmen who made the recent attempt on his life. An intense secret negotiation is now in process, looking to a deal whereby Washington would sacrifice Trujillo, and back Betancourt for head man in the Caribbean, in return for Betancourt's agreement to go along with an anti-Castro operation.

Paris. In 1958 the major trade union federation (CGT), which is controlled by the Communist Party, attempted a general strike to support the Pflimlin government and prevent de Gaulle from taking power. The CGT has just issued a manifesto threatening to use "every means at its disposal, including a general strike" in order to save the de Gaulle government from any military or political coup that might be mounted against it.

Geneva. After the Los Angeles convention, the foreign diplomats sent to their home governments their confidential estimates of the Democratic candidate. A consensus arrived at by a number of the major embassies predicted that Mr. Kennedy as President: 1) would hold to the non-recognition policy on Communist China for several months after inauguration, and then move toward "realistic modification"; 2) would take an extreme "anti-colonial" position on Africa, supporting immediate independence for all African nations and alleged nations—Algeria, Angola, Spanish Morocco, the Rhodesias included; 3) would be prepared to make greater concessions to "the Soviet viewpoint" while defending "essential rights" for West Berlin; 4) would reject the tendency of his foreign policy advisers such as Adlai Stevenson and George Kennan toward "neutralization" of West Germany and gradual withdrawal of U.S. forces from Europe; 5) would be willing to attend a new Summit, possibly in late 1961.

Algiers. The French Chief of Staff, General Ely, recently completed an on-the-spot inspection of the Algerian situation. He concluded that the Army has given up any thought that it could engineer a coup in metropolitan France against the government, no matter how completely de Gaulle may capitulate to the FLN. However, within Algeria itself a new plan is under secret discussion among both Army and European-civilian groups. If they see what they interpret as a sellout by Paris, the European civilians

in Algeria—many of whom are still well armed—would carry out a general uprising. From the outset they would, by the nature of the population distribution, control part of Algerian territory. They would declare as their sole objective their wish to remain French. The Army, under the circumstances, could properly decline to intervene against them, and would limit its activity to preventing clashes and war between Arabs and Europeans. The net result would be partition, with an independent, Arab-ruled Algeria and a second Algeria, linked with the Sahara, that would be an integral part of France.

London. From a letter to the *Daily Mail*: "'K' has been an initial of ill omen for us. The troubles started with the Kalifa; then came Kruger, then Kaiser—I do not know why not Kitler—then in quick succession Kabaka, Kikuyu, Kenyatta, Kimauthi, and Khrushchev. I sincerely hope that Kennedy will be the exception, but I have never heard that either he or his father was violently pro-British."



Baghdad. During its first year, many observers believed that the revolutionary regime of General Abdul Karim el-Kassem, its hands stained with the blood of King Faisal and Premier Nuri es-Said, was being transformed into a Communist puppet. The Communists were in control of the propaganda services, had key members planted in Kassem's staff, were infiltrating the Army, controlled the "People's Court" through their ally, Colonel Mahdawi, and were building the "People's Resistance Forces" as the paramilitary guarantor of power. But the pendulum swing reversed last year after the Communist-inspired Kirkuk riots and massacres. The murderous Colonel Mahdawi has been restrained. The People's Resistance Forces have been liquidated. Many of the Communist advisers have been dismissed. Though not yet by any means following an unambiguous anti-Communist policy, General Kassem seems to be striving to sustain the classical Bonapartist above-class, above-faction political posture.

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